



**COAST GUARD  
MARINE SAFETY OFFICE  
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**MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN 24 – 02**

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***Commercial Fishing Vessel Regulations***

This safety bulletin is published to alert the commercial fishing industry of implementation deadlines for compliance with **STABILITY** and **WATERTIGHT INTEGRITY** requirements.

Title 46 Code of Federal Regulations Part 28.500 Subpart E – Stability, applies to commercial fishing vessels 79 feet or more in length, not required to have a load line, **if the vessel had its keel laid** on or after September 15, 1991

The following regulations must be complied with no later than **October 01, 2002**:

**- Vessel Stability Instructions (46CFR 28.530)**

Stability instructions, tests, and calculations are required to ensure that the master, operator or person in charge of a fishing vessel has enough stability information to allow them to operate the vessel in a safe and stable condition.

**- Vessel Owner's Responsibility (46CFR28.505)**

Where tests or calculations are necessary to evaluate stability, it is the owner's responsibility to select a qualified individual to perform the tests or calculations. (I.E. Naval Architects; Professional Engineers). The owner must maintain test results, calculations and instructions.

Failure to meet the cut-off date will result in possible termination of the vessel's voyage, and the operator ordered to return the vessel to a mooring and to remain there until the owner obtains the stability instructions, and the vessel has met the terms of Subpart E.

A person willfully violating this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter shall be fined not more than \$5,000.00, imprisoned for not more than 1 year, or both.

The following regulation must be complied with no later than **April 01, 2003**:

- **Watertight Integrity** (46CFR 28.560)

Vessels built after September 15, 1991 must meet watertight integrity requirements.

- Each opening on a deck or bulkhead that is exposed to the weather must have a weather tight or watertight closure device.
- Unless the opening has a quick-acting watertight closure device, the coaming (bottom lip) of the doorway must be 24 inches above deck for vessels 79 feet and longer.
- The coaming to a fish hold that is under constant attention when the closure is not in place need only be 6 inches (0.15 meters) in height.
- Each window and portlight located within the deckhouse located below the first deck above the lowest weather deck must be provided with an inside deadlight. Each deadlight must be efficient, hinged, and arranged so that it can be effectively closed watertight.
- An opening in a vessel below the weather deck which is used for discharging water or debris resulting from processing or sorting operations must be fitted with a means to ensure the opening can be closed weathertight. This means of closing must be operable from a location which is outside the space containing the opening

Failure to meet the cut-off date will result in possible termination of the vessel's voyage, and the operator ordered to return the vessel to a mooring and to remain there until the owner obtains the repairs to come into compliance. A person willfully violating this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter shall be fined not more than \$ 5000.00, imprisoned for not more than 1 year or both.

**References:** 46 CFR Parts 1-40 Book, Requirements for Commercial Fishing Industry Vessels (Part 28) or downloaded at Code of Federal Regulations site: [www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/insex.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/insex.html)  
Additional information can be found in Navigation Vessel Inspection Circular (NVIC) 5-86: Voluntary Standard for U.S. Uninspected CFV site: [www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/nvic/index.htm](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/nvic/index.htm)

For further information, questions or to have your vessel evaluated to determine compliance with these requirements call Mr. Edward L. Weiss, Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Examiner at the Marine Safety Office Jacksonville, at 904-232-2664 X 138 or [eweiss@msojax.uscg.mil](mailto:eweiss@msojax.uscg.mil)

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